

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

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R 290811Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7796

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 2416

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PVOG, DA (RITT BJERREGAARD)

SUBJ: MINISTER OF EDUCATION RITT BJERREGAARD--
BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

REF: COPENHAGEN 2393

1. THE NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION, RITT JYTTE BJERREGAARD, WAS BORN IN COPENHAGEN ON MAY 19, 1941. HER INTEREST IN POLITICS COMMENCED IN HER CHILDHOOD HOME, SINCE HER FATHER, A CARPENTER BY PROFESSION, WAS AN ACTIVE COMMUNIST. HE LEFT THE PARTY, HOWEVER, WITH HUNDREDS OF OTHER DANES, IN 1956, DUE TO DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PARTY'S LINE ON THE HUNGARIAN UPRISING. MRS.BJERREGAARD STATES THAT ALTHOUGH COMMUNISM INTERESTED HER SHE NEVER CONSIDERED JOINING THE COMMUNIST PARTY, WHICH SHE FOUND TOO DOCTRINAIRE AND TOO DEPENDENT ON FOREIGN INFLUENCES.

2. MRS. BJERREGAARD IS A TRAINED EDUCATOR. SHE TOOK HER TEACHING DEGREE IN 1966, DID POST-GRADUATE WORK AT THE DANISH TEACHER'S COLLEGE IN 1967 AND AT ODENSE UNIVERSITY 1968-70, AND STUDIED AT THE MANCHESTER SCHOOL IN ENGLAND IN 1971.

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3. SHE JOINED THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY AS A STUDENT IN THE

EARLY SIXTIES, AND BECAME A BOARD MEMBER OF THE REGIONAL PARTY ORGANIZATION IN 1969. SHE WAS NOMINTED CANDIDATE FOR THE FOLKETING THAT YEAR AND, AT THE NATIONAL ELECTION IN SEPTEMBER 1971, WAS ELECTED, ONE OF THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS OF THAT BODY. AT AGE 32, SHE IS THE YOUNGEST MEMBER EVER APPOINTED TO A DANISH CABINET.

4. DURING HER TWO YEARS IN THE FOLKETING, SHE BECAME KNOWN, NOT ONLY FOR HER ATTRACTIVENESS, BUT AS A GIFTED MEMBER OF HER PARTY'S ANTI-COMMON MARKET WING, AND, MORE GENERALLY, AS ONE OF THE ARTICULATE SPOKESMEN IN THE LEFT OF THE PARTY. ONE OF HER CLOSE FRIENDS IS THE SOCIALIST PEOPLES' PARTY PARLIAMENTARIAN ROLF LUTKEN. SHE IS KNOWN TO HAVE A CAPACITY FOR WORK AND A STUBBORN STREAK, ATTRIBUTES SHE WILL NEED TO CONTINUE THE REFORM OF THE DANISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, BEGUN BY HER PREDECESSOR.

5. SHE IS MARRIED TO ASSISTANT PROFESSOR SOREN MORCH, WHO TEACHES AT ODENSE UNIVERSITY. THEY HAVE NO CHILDREN.
CROWE

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